

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Presented) A precipitated silica having the following physicochemical characteristics:

BET surface area	from 50 to 700 m <sup>2</sup> /g;
DBP absorption	from 100 to 450 g/100 g;
Choline chloride absorption	from 150 to 400 g/100 g (75% absorption by weight aqueous solution);
CTAB surface area	from 50 to 350 m <sup>2</sup> /g;
DBP/choline chloride absorption	less than 1.07; and
Sears number	greater than 25 ml/5g.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously Presented) The precipitated silica of Claim 1, having a modified Sears number of from at least 25 to 45.

5. (Previously Presented) The precipitated silica of Claim 1, having a BET surface area of 180-210 m<sup>2</sup>/g, a DBP adsorption of 280-450 g/100g, and a CTAB surface area of 130-200 m<sup>2</sup>/g.

- 6-9. (Canceled)

10. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing precipitated silica, comprising:  
simultaneously metering into an aqueous silicate solution more aqueous silicate  
solution and a Lewis and/or Brønsted acid over a period of 40 to 65 minutes to provide a  
mixture having a solid content of the suspension of from 79.3 to 104 g/l,  
acidifying the mixture to a pH of 7-3.0 to provide an acidified mixture,  
optionally filtering the acidified mixture to obtain a filtered precipitated silica,  
optionally drying the filtered precipitated silica,  
wherein the metered addition of the aqueous silicate solution and the Lewis and/or  
Brønsted acid is carried out while maintaining a constant alkali number in the mixture of at  
least [[1]] 15, and

wherein said silica has the following physicochemical characteristics:

BET surface area	from 50 to 700 m <sup>2</sup> /g;
DBP absorption	from 100 to 450 g/100 g;
Choline chloride absorption	from 150 to 400 g/100 g (75% absorption by weight aqueous solution);
CTAB surface area	from 50 to 350 m <sup>2</sup> /g;
DBP/choline chloride absorption	less than 1.07;
<u>Sears number</u>	<u>greater than 25 ml/5g.</u>

11. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 10, wherein the alkali number is of  
from 25 to 50 at least 15.

12. (Original) The process of claim 10, further comprising the addition of an electrolyte prior to or during the simultaneous addition of aqueous silicate solution and Lewis and/or Brønsted acid.

13. (Canceled)

14. (Previously Presented) A method, comprising:  
contacting the precipitated silica of claim 1 with a feed additive, a chemical intermediate, or a laundry detergent component.

15. (Previously Presented) A method, comprising:  
contacting the precipitated silica of claim 1 with formic acid, propionic acid, lactic acid, phosphoric acid, choline chloride solution, a plant extract, a melamine resin, a coatings additive, a fragrance, or a detergent.

16. (Previously Presented) An elastomer, plastic, battery separator, toothpaste, catalyst support or flocculation assistant, comprising:  
the precipitated silica of Claim 1.

17. (Currently Amended) A process for preparing precipitated silica, comprising:  
simultaneously metering into a vessel an aqueous silicate solution and a Lewis and/or Brønsted acid over a period of 40 to 65 minutes to provide a mixture having a solid content of the suspension of from 79.3 to 104 g/l,  
acidifying the mixture to a pH of 7-3 to provide an acidified mixture,  
optionally filtering the acidified mixture to obtain a filtered precipitated silica,

optionally drying the filtered precipitated silica,

wherein the metered addition of the aqueous silicate solution and the Lewis and/or Brønsted acid is carried out while maintaining a constant alkali number in the mixture of at least [[1]] 15, and

wherein said silica has the following physicochemical characteristics:

BET surface area	from 50 to 700 m <sup>2</sup> /g;
DBP absorption	from 100 to 450 g/100 g;
Choline chloride absorption	from 150 to 400 g/100 g (75% absorption by weight aqueous solution);
CTAB surface area	from 50 to 350 m <sup>2</sup> /g; and
DBP/choline chloride absorption	less than 1.07;
<u>Sears number</u>	<u>greater than 25 ml/5g.</u>

18. (Currently Amended) The process of claim 17, wherein the alkali number is of from 25 to 50 at least 15.

19. (Original) The process of claim 17, further comprising the addition of an electrolyte prior to or during the simultaneous addition of aqueous silicate solution and Lewis and/or Brønsted acid.

20. (Canceled)

21. (Canceled)

22. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 10, wherein said filtering of said acidified mixture is performed.

23. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 22, wherein said drying of said filtered precipitated silica is performed.

24. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 17, wherein said filtering of said acidified mixture is performed.

25. (Previously Presented) The process of Claim 24, wherein said drying of said filtered precipitated silica is performed.

26. (Previously Presented) The precipitated silica of Claim 1, having a modified Sears number greater than 28 ml/5g.

27. (Currently Amended) The precipitated silica of Claim 1, having a modified Sears number greater than [[25]] 28 ml/5g.

28. (Currently Amended) The precipitated silica of Claim 1, having a modified Sears number greater than [[25]] 28 ml/5g.